

In the Matter of )  
 )  
The Use of N11 Codes and Other ) CC Docket No. 92-105  
Abbreviated Dialing Arrangements )

KDOT hereby submits its comments on the status of 511 to determine whether the 211 and 511 dialing codes are being utilized in the manner for which they were assigned.

The Kansas Department of Transportation deployed 511 in Kansas on January 15, 2004. The system provides fully automated, near real-time, route-specific road condition, construction/detour, and travel-related weather (both current and forecasted) information for the Kansas State Highway System which includes Interstate, U.S., and State highway and Kansas Turnpike routes. Travelers can also request information for Nebraska State Highways (currently the only surrounding state with interoperable 511). As other adjacent states deploy 511 and become interoperable, access to their information will also be provided (currently contact information is provided). Kansas 511 may also broadcast active AMBER, General Transportation or Homeland Security Alerts as needed.

As of June 5, 2007, the Kansas 511 System has received 1,328,727 calls, with call volumes steadily increasing each year since deployment.

The mean average monthly call volume since deployment has been 32,408 calls.

During severe winter storms, daily call volumes have been as high as nearly 65,000 calls. Kansas 511 has also received increased call volumes during spring/summer storms, with call volumes more than twenty times higher than the average seasonal call volume, depending upon the storm severity and whether flooding occurred.

Usage analysis to date reveals that weather is the number one cause for high call volumes, particularly during inclement winter weather. Typically, call volumes during winter months are much higher than during other months of the year. Use of 511 during non-winter, weather-related periods has shown significant increase over time, with call volumes during spring and summer consistently spiking during days with storm warnings/watches or during severe weather periods. Spiked call volumes have been most notably observed during the month of May. In general, late spring and summer months (May to August) call volumes are consistently higher than when the system was first deployed.

Prior to 511, road condition information was provided to Kansas travelers by a road condition hotline that provided regional weather-related road condition information and selected construction/detour information. The system was primarily used and most frequently updated during severe winter weather. Comparatively, use of 511 during non-winter, weather-related periods has shown significant increase, even with minimal promotion when the system was newly deployed. With continued promotion efforts, it is believed the traveling public has come to rely upon 511 to provide travel information for severe weather, regardless of the season, as well as construction/detour information to aid them in their trip planning or as they travel.

The Kansas 511 System includes a comment line whereby users may leave comments. Consistently since deployment, the majority of

comments have been extremely positive, with less than 1% of comments expressing concerns or criticism. Many of these comments have been from callers who had misunderstandings about the system or its use.

Comments reveal that users like 511 and find it helpful and easy to use. They like the option of voice or touch-tone commands. Many callers have told us what a significant improvement 511 is over our Road Condition Hotline—511 is simpler, more complete and quicker to use (they like being able to request the specific route and segment for which they want information). They have also expressed great appreciation for 511 and hope the service will continue.

System enhancements have occurred since deployment to increase satisfaction for system users. Planned enhancements for the Kansas 511 system include improved/enhanced voice technology, expanded information for metropolitan cities (the greater Kansas City metropolitan area, Wichita and Topeka), as well as system enhancements due to emerging technologies that avail cost-effective system operations. As resources allow, system content, such as transit information are also planned for the system.

## **II. CONCLUSION**

Public response to 511 is overwhelmingly positive and Kansans have repeatedly articulated they like the service KDOT provides and want it to continue. KDOT further believes that increased system usage indicates that Kansas travelers have come to rely upon 511 for travel information, particularly during inclement weather. 511 is considered a valuable resource by KDOT for communicating with travelers and a valuable tool for increasing safe travels on its highways.

With past, current and planned enhancements, Kansas continues to invest in 511 and in providing a quality service to Kansas travelers and they would experience significant loss if 511 is not sustained.

KDOT strongly believes the 511 dialing code is being utilized in the manner to which the code was assigned and the Commission does not need to take any action to facilitate more widespread use.